

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 2015

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege for me to recognize the 100th anniversary of Kiwanis International. Annually, Kiwanis clubs in 80 countries raise more than \$100 million and dedicate more than 18 million volunteer hours to strengthen communities and serve children.

Meeting the needs of children has always been one of Kiwanis members' foremost priorities. Under their new motto, "Serving the Children of the World," Kiwanis members have helped to establish programs that ensure the health and education of young children. In Central Florida, Kiwanis members generously give their time and resources to provide scholarships and community-building opportunities for local students, as well as care for the underprivileged.

Kiwanis members' commitment to serving their neighbors and the self-sacrifice that entails represents what is good and noble in our nation. There are children and others whose lives have been permanently impacted for good by the work of Kiwanis members.

I am truly grateful for the Kiwanis Club members of Central Florida. Our community is stronger, and the future of our youth is brighter because of their service.

COMBATTING HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE UNITED STATES

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 2015

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, this week the House is considering 12 bills designed to fight the growing problem of human trafficking in the United States. These bipartisan bills will provide support and services to the victims of trafficking crimes and boost resources for law enforcement.

According to the FBI, sex trafficking is the fastest-growing business of organized crime and the third-largest criminal enterprise in the world. More than 300,000 American children are at risk of becoming victims of sex trafficking annually in what is estimated to be a \$9.8 billion industry.

Human trafficking is modern day slavery that preys on vulnerable individuals, and this epidemic is not isolated to far-off places. It is happening every day in the places we call home.

As we take steps at the federal level to end this despicable and horrifying practice, there are many organizations dedicated to helping victims and preventing even more people from being mistreated.

Earlier this month in Rowan County, North Carolina, nearly 200 supporters gathered to hear testimonies from human trafficking survivors as well as discuss ways to increase awareness and assist victims in the local community at the Triad Ladder of Hope's First Annual Human Trafficking Awareness Gala.

And today I'm wearing a bracelet made from recycled soda tabs that was designed by Monarch, a Christian ministry that creates accessories as a unique way to engage in the fight against human trafficking.

As the charm on this bracelet reminds us, there is hope that lives discarded can be reclaimed.

RECOGNIZING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

HON. CHAKA FATTAH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 2015

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the National Federation of the Blind.

For 75 years NFB has served as the voice of the blind in Washington and through their affiliate organizations in every state across the country. I congratulate them on this milestone of service, their advocacy efforts on behalf of blind Americans, and their continued work to make our communities more just, equal, and safe for blind individuals.

As the largest organization of blind and low-vision people in the country, NFB works day in and day out to change what it means to be blind and to help realize the complete integration of blind individuals into society.

On this 75th anniversary, I join in celebrating the National Federation of the Blind's long-list of achievements and look forward to their continued success representing the million-plus blind individuals in the United States.

IN HONOR OF SPECIALIST JOSHUA FERNANDEZ

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 2015

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw the attention of the House of Representatives to the remarkable performance of one of my constituents, Specialist Joshua Fernandez, proudly serving in the California National Guard. A native of Soledad, California, Specialist Fernandez was selected as the 2015 California National Guard Soldier of the Year. This title is only bestowed to those soldiers who emerge victorious from the Guard's Best Warrior Competition; a grueling, four-day contest that includes a 6-mile road march, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear

knowledge report, and a series of physical fitness and rifle and pistol competitions.

SPC Joshua Fernandez serves as a Team Leader with Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment. He served three years active duty service at Fort Stewart, Georgia with the 3rd Infantry Division prior to enlisting in the California Army National Guard. He has served in one combat deployment during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan attached to a Special Operations Task Force.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute Specialist Joshua Fernandez for his steadfast commitment to service to our great Nation on behalf of the House of Representatives. He is a shining example of the dedication and sacrifices made by the men and women who serve in United States Armed Forces.

STRENGTHENING CHILD WELFARE RESPONSE TO TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 26, 2015

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 469, Strengthening Child Welfare Response to Trafficking Act of 2015. Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery. This bill would make it possible to accurately identify and help children from the child welfare system who are trafficked into the sex trade.

The sickening fact is that human trafficking is a big, booming business—trafficking a child for sex can be more lucrative than drug trafficking. This is why I am glad to join my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, in taking additional steps to protect our sons and daughters from this horrible crime.

As we recognize January as Human Trafficking Awareness month, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this bipartisan legislation so that we may protect our most vulnerable children, including those in the foster care system, who have been victimized through no fault of their own.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 2015

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$18,086,335,602,055.12. We've added \$7,459,458,553,142.04 to our debt in 6 years. This is over \$7.4 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF MR.
CUB, ERNIE BANKS

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 2015

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary life and accomplishments of Ernie Banks—known by Chicagoans as “Mr. Cub.”

Chicago lost a true hero and friend when Ernie Banks passed away on Friday, January 23. His baseball accomplishments are legendary. During his playing days, cheers would always erupt at Wrigley Field when Banks would make a clutch hit or a spectacular diving catch. His greatness was well acknowledged: Banks was voted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1977—the very first year he was eligible.

While Banks excelled on the field, he also blazed a trail off of it. As the first African-American player for the Chicago Cubs, he was a pioneer in our community and across the country. Banks treated people well, got along with most everyone and stood for justice even as he faced discrimination. During road trips, hotels and restaurants open to his white teammates were often closed to him and other African-Americans. I am happy to see how far we have come as a country throughout the course of his career and his lifetime.

Banks founded the Ernie Banks Live Above and Beyond Foundation, which helps promote social welfare and assist youth and seniors who may need assistance. I know he was very proud of the young players on Chicago's own Jackie Robinson West team who won the Little League championship last year.

According to Fox Chicago, Jackie Robinson West player Lawrence Noble said, ‘I met [Ernie Banks] during the summer and he was such an inspirational person to me, it was just very sad hearing that he passed away.’

It's clear that the next generation appreciates the impact of Mr. Cub. We can honor the legacy of Mr. Cub by doing our own part to break down barriers and build a better community. We will miss you, Ernie.

MISSING CHILDREN'S ASSISTANCE
ACT AMENDMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 26, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 246, a bill “To Improve The Response To Victims Of Child Sex Trafficking,” which broadens the issues to be reported on the federal tip line on Internet-related child sexual exploitation run by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to explicitly include child sex trafficking—specifically, by replacing the term “child prostitution” with the term “child sex trafficking, including child prostitution.”

Trafficking in humans is a major problem across the globe and in our own country. As

lawmakers, we have a moral responsibility to combat this scourge and protect our children, especially those without parents to care for them, from being exploited and falling through the cracks.

As the Founder and Chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I understand how important it is to defend those who are too young to defend themselves.

This problem is personal for me because according to the U.S. Department of Justice, my home city of Houston, Texas is the epicenter of human trafficking in the United States with over 200 active brothels in Houston and two new ones opening each month.

Houston has also surpassed Las Vegas for the dubious distinction of having the most strip clubs and illicit spas serving as fronts for sex trafficking.

Human trafficking in Texas is not limited to Houston. During the 2011 Dallas Super Bowl, 133 underage arrests for prostitution were made and during this year's massive effort “Operation Cross Country” led by the FBI, several pimps were arrested.

Between 1998 and 2003 more than 500 people from 18 countries were ensnared in 57 forced labor operations in almost a dozen cities throughout the State of Texas.

The Justice Department's Internet Crimes against Children Task Force (which coordinates with 61 federal, state and local law enforcement task forces) reports that the number of child victims of prostitution increased by more than 900% between 2004 and 2008.

Currently, our state child welfare systems do not properly identify and help the children that have been taken by this horrible industry.

Even more disturbing is that the protections provided by our child welfare systems often do not extend to young victims of trafficking.

Hard as it is to believe, in some states trafficked youths are not even regarded or classified as victims.

Rather, they are treated as youthful offenders and consigned to the criminal justice system.

These kids are not criminals. They are victims, robbed of their innocence by adult criminals.

They are boys and girls who have been taken advantage of and are unable to escape an ugly system.

I support H.R. 246 because it is focused on using technology to minimize the sex trafficking of vulnerable children and empowers people by giving the opportunity and means to report suspicious activity.

Under current law, the Health and Human Services Department (HHS) provides an annual grant to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children for a range of activities, including running a tip line that allows online users and Internet service providers to report Internet-related child sexual exploitation.

This tip line includes reports on child pornography, online enticement of children for sexual acts, child prostitution, sex tourism involving children, extra familial child sexual molestation, unsolicited obscene material sent to a child, misleading domain names and misleading words or digital images on the Internet.

I strongly support H.R. 246 and urge my colleague to join me in voting for its passage which will help bring an end to the evil practice that is child sex trafficking.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT
OF COLUMBIA BUDGET AUTON-
OMY ACT OF 2015

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 2015

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, District of Columbia residents raise billions of dollars annually for their local budget, and, like Americans everywhere, claim the right to control the funds they themselves raise to support their city as fundamental to their American citizenship. Therefore, today I introduce the District of Columbia Budget Autonomy Act of 2015, the second bill I introduce this Congress, to allow the District's local-taxpayer-raised budget to take effect immediately when passed by the city, without being subject to congressional approval.

Control over the dollars raised by local taxpayers is central to local control, the oldest American government principle. Beyond this core principle, permitting the city's local budget to become law without a redundant congressional approval would have multiple practical benefits for both the city and Congress. For the city, a timely budget means eliminating the uncertainty of the congressional approval process, which has a significant negative effect on the city's bond rating, adding unnecessary interest costs for local taxpayers; improving the District's ability to make accurate revenue forecasts; and reducing the countless operational problems that result when the city's budget cannot be implemented until Congress approves it (even when it is not delayed, which rarely occurs). Also of major importance, the bill would permit the District to use the typical state and local government fiscal year (July 1–June 30), which is used to provide ample time to prepare for the opening of schools in September, instead of the current federal fiscal year (October 1–September 30), used for the convenience of Members of Congress, not the needs of the city. Moreover, the D.C. local budget consumes valuable subcommittee, committee, and floor time in both houses of Congress, the most inefficient and redundant annual process in the Congress. Yet the D.C. budget is of interest only to those members who use it to promote their own issues, violating a principle of local self-government that they value for their own districts and states.

Increasing recognition of the hardships and delays caused by the congressional approval process has led Congress to begin freeing the city from many congressional constraints. We made significant progress in the last Congress on a major element of budget autonomy. There is unprecedented bipartisan and bicameral support for preventing D.C. shutdowns, which have been constantly threatened as the Congress now almost always fails to pass appropriations bills. Under the fiscal year 2014 D.C. Appropriations bill, D.C. was, for the first time ever, exempt from shutdowns for an entire fiscal year—2015. The fiscal year 2015 D.C. Appropriations bill also exempts D.C. from shutdowns for all of fiscal year 2016. In addition, the president's budgets last Congress and the Senate's D.C. appropriations bills would have granted D.C. budget autonomy. This progress from both Congress and the Executive invites the inevitable next step—a permanent shutdown exemption bill.